

Examining Consumer Satisfaction in Online Food Delivery Services: Evidence from Foodpanda Users

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Abstract

This study empirically analyzes the determinants of consumer satisfaction with Foodpanda's delivery services among students in Melaka, Malaysia, focusing on customer service, promotional types and payment methods. Utilizing a quantitative survey of 168 respondents and analysis via SPSS 25.0, the results reveal that only customer service significantly influences consumer satisfaction. Payment methods and promotion types were found to have no statistically significant impact in this context. The findings conclude that the human element specifically customer service encounters is the primary driver of consumer satisfaction. Consequently, online food delivery platforms should prioritize enhancing customer support and delivery professionalism to maintain a competitive edge.

Keywords: Consumer Satisfaction, Customer Service, Promotional Types, Payment Methods, Foodpanda

Introduction

Foodpanda is an online grocery and food delivery platform based in Berlin, Germany, and currently stands as the largest food delivery and grocery platform in Asia, operating in over 40 countries, including Malaysia (Gan et al., 2022). Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the reliance on such digital platforms has doubled, as consumers were restricted to online ordering and takeaways during Movement Control Orders (MCO) (Gan et al., 2022). In Malaysia, Foodpanda is a market leader, with approximately 91% of users utilizing the application, making it a primary choice for university students and urban residents who face time constraints in their daily lives (Sabeh, 2024).

The rapid expansion of smartphone technology and digital payment infrastructures has transformed the online food delivery (OFD) market into an essential service sector globally.

Among various platforms, Foodpanda has established a dominant market presence by offering seamless ordering, real-time tracking and diverse culinary options. Extant literature of OFD services has extensively examined core operational determinants such as overall e-service quality, delivery speed, app usability, and system reliability. Furthermore, scholars have documented that promotional strategies (e.g., discount vouchers and free delivery) and digital payment convenience (e.g., e-wallets and online banking) significantly influence general consumer adoption and initial platform usage (Kamkankaew et. al., 2026; Mishad et. al., 2026).

Consumer satisfaction is a critical determinant of Foodpanda's success and long-term viability, as it directly influences customer retention, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth (Sabeh, 2024; Gan et al., 2022). While the platform provides significant convenience by allowing users to order meals at their fingertips, it faces ongoing challenges related to delivery timeliness, food quality, and pricing (Effendi et al., 2025; Gan et al., 2022). Consequently, understanding the factors that influence consumer satisfaction is essential for Foodpanda to maintain its competitive edge in the volatile food and beverage industry. (Effendi et al., 2025; Gan et al., 2022).

However, despite the breadth of general OFD literature, existing studies have primarily focused on broad working-age populations, working adults, or general urban consumers in primary metropolitan hubs. Consequently, a critical empirical gap remains regarding how specific operational touchpoints interact among Generation Z university students in provincial educational hubs such as Melaka. Gen Z university students represent a distinct demographic characterized by high digital fluency, unique lifestyle routines, and strict pocket-money budget constraints. While prior research acknowledges that promotions attract users, it remains unclear how promotional frequency balances with customer service responsiveness and payment seamlessness when Gen Z students face delivery glitches or transaction errors on campus (Effendi et al., 2025).

Research Question

Is there a significant influence of customer service, promotional types, and payment methods on consumer satisfaction with Foodpanda's delivery services?

Research Objectives

Examining the influence between customer service, promotional types and payment methods and consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

Hypotheses

H₀: Customer service, types of promotion and payment methods have no influence with consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

H₁: Customer service, types of promotion and payment methods have an in with consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

Problem Statement

The rapid expansion of online food delivery platforms such as Foodpanda has intensified market competition, making consumer satisfaction a critical issue for services sustainability and user retention. Consumer satisfaction in digital food delivery services is largely influenced

by services related attributes, including customer service, promotional strategies and the convenience of payment methods (Parasuraman et al., 2005; Ray et al., 2019)

In the digital services market, customers can switch to competing platforms with minimal effort if service quality is inconsistent or when promotions and discounts are discontinued (Gayathri et. al., 2026; Kamkankaew et. al., 2026). Although Foodpanda offers customer support, frequent promotional programs customer and multiple payment option methods, consumer dissatisfaction related to the services responsiveness, perceived promotional value and payment convenience remains evident, Prior studies indicate that ineffective customer service and poorly designed promotion can negatively affect perceived service quality and satisfaction, while limited or inconvenient payment methods may reduce perceived value in online services (Chandon et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2010)

Existing OFD research is predominantly concentrated at national or major metropolitan levels, while investigation into provincial cities with distinct consumer demographics, such as students, remains scarce. For example, Gen Z grew up in the digital era, is highly tech-savvy, and prefers flexible digital solutions that simplify daily life (Mishad el. al., 2026). However, empirical studies examining the combined effects of customer service, promotional types and payment methods on consumer satisfaction in online food delivery platforms remain limited. This study addresses this gap by investigating how these factors collectively have a relationship towards consumer satisfaction for Foodpanda's delivery services, thereby providing insights to enhance service quality and consumer experience in the digital food delivery sector.

Literature Review

Online Food Delivery (OFD)

Customer service is a vital component of the online food delivery system, encompassing support channels and the professionalism of staff (Effendi et al., 2025; Sabeh, 2024). Research indicates that many customers perceive Foodpanda's customer service as poor, particularly regarding issues like double-charging on debit cards, lack of order confirmation messages, and difficulties in tracking riders (Gan et al., 2022). Reliable customer service is essential for building trust; without it, negative experiences regarding complaint handling can promptly spread across social networking sites, discouraging potential users from using the app (Gan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the professionalism and politeness of the delivery personnel are key elements of the service quality that directly impact the customer's total experience (Effendi et al., 2025).

Customer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is defined as a state where a customer's expectations of a product or service are in accordance with the reality received (Sabeh, 2024; Gan et al., 2022). It is a pleasurable sensation resulting from the fulfilment of one's needs, goals, and desires (Gan et al., 2022). In the context of online food delivery, satisfaction is an overall evaluation based on the entire buying and consumption experience, including interactions with the mobile application and the physical delivery of food (Sabeh, 2024; Gan et al., 2022). Satisfied customers are significantly more likely to have repurchase intentions and recommend the service to others, whereas dissatisfaction can lead to negative electronic word-of-mouth that damages the brand's reputation (Sabeh, 2024; Gan et al., 2022).

Types of Promotion

Effendi et al., (2025) mentioned that promotions, including discounts, coupons, and loyalty programs, are strategic tools used to attract new customers and retain existing ones by reducing the perceived cost of a purchase. Financial incentives such as special deals and vouchers effectively enhance a customer's intention to repeatedly use mobile food delivery applications (Sabeh, 2024). While some studies suggest that promotion types may not always have a direct, significant impact on overall satisfaction compared to pricing perception, they remain crucial for brand engagement, particularly among budget-conscious segments like university students (Effendi et al., 2025). Tailoring promotions to specific demographics—such as time-limited offers or student-exclusive discounts—can increase a customer's perceived value and foster long-term loyalty (Effendi et al., 2025).

Payment Methods

The variety and efficiency of payment methods are central to the convenience of online food delivery (Sabeh, 2024). Customers prioritize the simplicity of paying for items online to avoid physical transactions and save time (Gan et al., 2022). In Malaysia, the most popular payment method is e-wallets (used by 45.2% of respondents), followed by bank transfers (31.1%), credit/debit cards (14.1%), and cash on delivery (9.6%) (Effendi et al., 2025). Transparent pricing and secure payment gateways are critical, as errors such as being overcharged can lead to significant consumer frustration (Sabeh, 2024; Gan et al., 2022). The availability of multiple payment options allows customers to choose their preferred method, thereby enhancing their overall satisfaction with the app's user-friendliness (Effendi et al., 2025; Sabeh, 2024).

Conceptual Framework

Thus, the conceptual framework guiding this study is as follows;



Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

This framework illustrates the structural relationship between service inputs and customer outcome measures. On the left side, the model identifies three key independent dimensions such as i) customer service (evaluates the quality of support interactions provided to

customers), ii) promotion types (examines the variety and relevance of marketing offers available), and iii) payment methods (refers to the accessibility and variety of transactions options offered to users).

On the right side, these inputs directly influence two core dependent variables representing customer outcomes such as i) satisfaction levels (measures the overall degree of customer contentment with the service) and ii) service perception (represents the customer's evaluation of overall delivery performance).

In summary, this framework proposes that optimizing front-end operational factors specifically support quality, promotional offers and payment convenience will positively shape service perception and elevates overall customer delivery satisfaction.

Methodology

Research Instrument

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire comprising five (5) sections to facilitate respondents' participation.

Section A: included questions related to respondents' demographic profiles.

Section B: contained items measuring consumer satisfaction with Foodpanda's food delivery services.

Section C: Foodpanda's customer service.

Section D: types of promotions offered by Foodpanda.

Section E: payment methods provided by Foodpanda.

Population

This study employed purposive sampling, whereby a group of subjects with specific characteristics was deliberately selected as respondents (Chua Yan Piaw, 2021). The sample selection was restricted to individuals (Gen Z) who actively use Foodpanda's delivery services, in line with the predefined criteria established by the researchers.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Purposive sampling was applied to ensure that each selected sample possessed the relevant characteristics aligned with the research objectives. The determination of sample size was based on the formula proposed by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), expressed as:

$$N > 50 + 8M$$

where:

N = sample size

M = number of independent variables

Given that the study involved three independent variables, the minimum required sample size was calculated as follows:

$$N > 50 + 8(3) = 74$$

Based on this calculation, the minimum sample size required for the study was more than 74 respondents. However, the final sample for this research consisted of 168 respondents, which exceeded the minimum requirement and enhanced the robustness of the statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. This software was employed to facilitate accurate and systematic data processing following the completion of the quantitative study. The use of SPSS enhanced the efficiency of data analysis in terms of time and effort, while remaining cost-effective, and enabled the researcher to generate precise statistical results for each variable examined in the study.

Results and Discussion

Regression Analysis Results

Table 1

Coefficient

Variables	t	Sig.
Customer Service	5.45	.000
Promotional Types	0.88	.380
Payment Methods	1.16	.251

The findings of the study indicate that the regression analysis results show that consumer satisfaction is influenced by only one independent variable, namely customer service. In contrast, types of promotion and payment methods do not have a significant influence and are not predictors of consumer satisfaction. Based on these findings, the relationship between consumer satisfaction and customer service can be explained through the regression analysis conducted in this study.

Hypothesis Analysis

H₀: Customer service, types of promotion and payment methods have no influence with consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

H₁: Customer service, types of promotion and payment methods have an influence with consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

Based on Table 1, it can be identified that customer service significantly influences consumer satisfaction. This is evidenced by the significance value for customer service, which is 0.000. Since this value is less than the threshold of 0.05, customer service is considered statistically significant. Therefore, this variable demonstrates a significant influence on consumer satisfaction. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted for customer service.

In contrast, types of promotion do not influence consumer satisfaction, as the significance value for promotional types is 0.380, which exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the effect of promotional types on consumer satisfaction is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted, while the alternative hypothesis (H₁) is rejected, indicating no significant influence of promotional types on consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services.

The third independent variable, payment methods, was found not to influence consumer satisfaction toward Foodpanda's delivery services, as indicated by a significance value of 0.251. Since this value exceeds the threshold of 0.05, the effect is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected, indicating no significant influence of payment methods on consumer satisfaction.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The primary objective of this research was to evaluate the factors influencing consumer satisfaction towards Foodpanda's delivery services, specifically focusing on customer service, payment types, and promotion types. The empirical findings of this study conclude that among the investigated variables, customer service is the only factor that significantly influences consumer satisfaction. (Effendi et al., 2025; Kedah et al., 2015) This result underscores that while digital convenience and financial incentives are relevant, the human element—characterized by responsiveness, reliability, and empathy—remains the critical determinant of a positive consumption experience. (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kedah et al., 2015)

Consumer satisfaction is established when a service's performance meets or exceeds a customer's prior expectations. (Gan et al., 2022; Ahmed et al., 2011). In the context of Foodpanda, the results suggest that payment efficiency and promotion types, while helpful for initial attraction, do not fundamentally drive long-term satisfaction if the support infrastructure is perceived as lacking (Effendi et al., 2025). Instead, the quality of service encounters, such as the speed of query resolution and the professionalism of delivery personnel, serves as the primary antecedent to customer retention and brand loyalty (Kedah et al., 2015). This highlights that for online food delivery platforms, reliable customer support is the cornerstone of maintaining a competitive edge in a volatile market (Effendi et al., 2025; Karim et al., 2020)

Based on the finding that customer service is the sole significant driver of consumer satisfaction, the following recommendations are proposed for Foodpanda and similar online food delivery (OFD) providers:

1. Enhance Responsiveness and Real-Time Support: Management should prioritize the speed of response to customer queries and complaints. Implementing robust real-time support channels can help resolve issues regarding order status or delivery delays promptly, thereby reducing consumer frustration. (Azman et al., 2021; Kedah et al., 2015).
2. Invest in Delivery Personnel Training: Since the delivery rider is often the only physical touchpoint between the brand and the consumer, training should focus on professionalism, politeness, and neatness (Effendi et al., 2025; Elvandari et al., 2018). Enhancing these "tangible" and "empathy" dimensions of service quality directly boosts satisfaction levels (Karim et al., 2020).
3. Optimize Order Accuracy and Recovery: To build trust, the platform must ensure that orders are received exactly as requested. In cases of error, a seamless compensation or replacement policy should be in place to turn a potentially negative experience into a satisfactory one. (Elvandari et al., 2018).

Author Contributions

Mohd Esa, M., Azmi, S.N.S, Ibrahim, R., Mohd Hasini, N.F., & Naseri, R.N.N. contributed equally to the conception, design, data collection, analysis, writing and final approval of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by other journals. All authors have approved the review, agree with its submission and declare no conflict of interest regarding the manuscript.

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